

What is claimed is:

1. A remote control camera system comprising:

(a) an image pickup device;

5 (b) a changing element for changing a pickup direction of said image pickup device;

(c) a composing element for forming composite image information by composing a plurality of pieces of image information picked up by said image pickup device in different image pickup directions;

10 (d) a memory for storing said composite image information;

(e) an extraction element for forming extracted image information derived from said composite image information in response to a request from outside; and

(f) an output device for outputting said extracted image information.

15 2. The remote control camera system according to claim 1, wherein said composite image information is information formed by continuously composing said plurality of pieces of image information.

20 3. The remote control camera system according to claim 1, wherein an image pickup process by said image pickup device, a composing process of said plurality of pieces of picked-up image information by said composing element and a storage process made by said memory for the composite image information that has been composed are repeated at predetermined timing.

25 4. The remote control camera system according to claim 3, wherein

said composing element forms composite image information by using images picked up at different timing.

5 The remote control camera system according to claim 1, further comprising:

live image output device for outputting a live image,

wherein, in the case when there is not any request from outside for a predetermined period of time, said image pickup device is directed in the direction in which an extracted image lastly output was picked up, and a live image picked up by  
10 said image pickup device is output through said live image output device.

6. The remote control camera system according to claim 1, wherein said image pickup device comprises:

(a-1) an element for changing a zoom magnification;

15 said composing element comprises:

(c-1) an element for generating a plurality of pieces of composite image information for respective different zoom magnifications; and

said extraction element comprises:

(e-1) selector for selecting a piece of composite image information among  
20 said plurality of pieces of composite image information in response to a zoom request from outside; and

(e-2) an element for subjecting said one piece of composite image information to an image processing suitable for said zoom request from outside and for generating said extracted image information.

25

7. The remote control camera system according to claim 1, wherein  
said image pickup device comprises:

(a-2) an element for changing a zoom magnification;

said composing element comprises:

5 (c-2) an element for generating one piece of composite image information at  
a maximum zoom magnification; and

said extraction element comprises:

(e-3) an element for subjecting said piece of composite image information to  
an image processing suitable for the zoom request from outside and for generating  
10 said extracted image information.

8. The remote control camera system according to claim 1, wherein

said image pickup device comprises a plurality of cameras, and

said remote control camera system further comprises:

15 (g) live image output device which, in response to said request from outside,  
outputs live image information picked up by at least one camera among said plurality  
of cameras as live images.

9. The remote control camera system according to claim 8, wherein,

20 in the case when there is not any request from outside for a predetermined  
period of time, said at least one camera is directed in the direction in which an  
extracted image lastly output was picked up, and live image information picked up by  
said at least one camera is output through said live image output device.

25 10. The remote control camera system according to claim 8, wherein

said extraction element comprises:

(c-4) an element for generating said extracted image information by combining said live image information and said composite image information.

5           11. The remote control camera system according to claim 1, wherein  
said image pickup device comprises a plurality of cameras, and  
said composing element generates said composite image information by  
composing a plurality of pieces of image information picked up by said plurality of  
cameras.

10           12. The remote control camera system according to claim 1, wherein  
said output device outputs said extracted image information only when said  
corresponding request is made from outside.

15           13. The remote control camera system according to claim 1, wherein  
said image pickup device comprises:  
(a-3) a conversion element for converting a voltage to a displacement;  
(a-4) a driving member connected to a displacement member of said  
conversion element;

20           (a-5) a focus lens section that contacts said driving member in a manner so as  
to slide thereon; and

(a-6) a driving voltage generator for generating a driving voltage to be  
applied to said conversion element.

25           14. The remote control camera system according to claim 13, wherein

said image pickup device comprises:

(a-7) a zoom lens section that contacts said driving member in a manner so as to slide thereon.

5 15. An image transmission method comprising the steps of:

(a) after an image pickup device has picked up an image, changing the direction in which said image pickup device is directed so as to again pick up an image, this operation being repeated a predetermined number of times;

10 (b) forming a continuous composite image from a plurality of images obtained in said step (a);

(c) extracting a predetermined portion from said composite image in response to a request from outside; and

15 (d) transmitting an extracted image obtained in said step (c) to a sender of said request.

15

16. The image transmission method according to claim 15, wherein

in the case when there is not any request from outside for a predetermined period of time, said image pickup device is directed in the direction in which an extracted image lastly output was picked up, and a live image picked up by said  
20 image pickup device are output.

17. The image transmission method according to claim 15, wherein

said composite image includes a plurality of composite images that are respectively composed by images picked up in different zoom magnifications, and  
25 said step (c) further comprises the steps of:

(c-2) subjecting said composite image information obtained in said step (c-1)  
5 to an image processing in accordance with said zoom information so as to generate  
information of said extracted image.